

Fall 2017

Division of Communication Studies, Fine Arts and Literature Fall 2017 Newsletter

Bridgewater College

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DIVISION *of* COMMUNICATION STUDIES, FINE ARTS, AND LITERATURE

NEWSLETTER

ART | COMMUNICATION STUDIES AND THEATRE | ENGLISH | MUSIC

FALL 2017

Blubaugh Interns with Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage

Erica Blubaugh, a junior English major, landed a highly competitive internship for the Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage. Blubaugh described her experience: "I was thrust into an environment that was both challenging and eye-opening, while surrounded by people that value the preservation and celebration of cultures all over the globe.



My internship taught me valuable lessons in the professional world, exposed me to various career paths I had never considered, and introduced me to unforgettable people. Working in Public Affairs during the weeks prior to the Folklife Festival pushed me out of my comfort zone, and it was exciting to have found a field where my education and strengths in writing were considered an asset."



MESSAGE FROM THE DIVISION HEAD

As I begin my 26th year at BC and reflect back on the wonderful students, faculty and staff I have had the privilege to have met, I realize that what has always made BC so special for me are the people. Today, I serve as division head for the Division of Communication Studies, Fine Arts, and Literature. Our division focus is on developing creativity, message production and understanding and adapting to audiences. It is truly a division where theory meets practice and where we are responding to student demand to develop new programming. This past spring, we graduated the College's first theatre major, and our division is in the process of developing a professional writing major. We are also developing a new interdisciplinary master's program in response to student interest and changes in the training needed for certain careers. The faculty are working on a proposal for a 3-2 master's program in the area of digital media. It would allow BC students to begin work on their master's degree while completing their senior year and complete the master's after staying at BC just one additional year. As we continue to think about new programs, we'd love to hear from our alumni. I would love to speak with you in person at Homecoming, or by email or phone at any time.

Hope to see you soon!

Jeff

Dr. Jeff Pierson
jpierson@bridgewater.edu



SATURDAY, OCTOBER 28

Department Receptions • 10 a.m., Campus Mall

**Stop by and reunite with faculty
and fellow alumni!**

No Rest in Sight for the Ghost of Cole Hall

Theatre is making lots of noise in and around Cole Hall and the famed Ghost of Cole Hall is sure to get no rest. A new major in theatre and an increasingly prolific and productive Pinion Players club are providing frequent opportunities for Bridgewater College students, faculty, staff and community members to engage with all things theatrical.

In April of 2017, the Board of Trustees voted to approve a major in theatre. Jordan Haugh '17 crossed the commencement stage in May as Bridgewater College's first student to earn a B.A. in theatre. With more theatre majors and minors preparing to graduate, the flourishing of the theatre program as an academic pursuit can be traced back to our alumni. As students, you asked for more classes, more faculty, more workshops and more opportunities both on and off campus to produce and create theatre. And when you were provided those opportunities, you took full advantage of them. You came, so we had to build it.

We have added classes and brought in professionals as adjunct faculty, teaching



special topics courses that include Theatre Production I and II, Scenic Painting, Movement for Theatre, Advanced Lighting Design, Costume Design and more. Improvisation is now offered annually, and we are planning to revive the Theatre in London travel course for May Term.

The Pinion Players club continues to be a theatrical force. Restructured in 2005 as an entirely student-run organization, Pinion Players elects officers annually, creates a varied season responding to the needs and interests of the current students and community, and takes full responsi-

bility for managing the challenges associated with producing quality live theatre. The old classroom below the Cole Hall stage has been configured as a black box theatre space where current students "put into practice" what they are learning from their faculty mentors. The past year alone the black box theatre saw productions of *The Story of Us* by Macy Morris '17 and *The Bucket List* by Emma Leweke '18. Upstairs, the Cole Hall stage was home to the Pinion Players' Monologue Festival, which they plan to make an annual event.

The question is often asked: why would you want to study theatre in college? To this, Theatre at Bridgewater College answers—to flourish in your life and career. Theatre prepares you for a future in myriad careers with training that reaches far beyond the stage. Next time you are on campus, come by—sit in on a class, watch a rehearsal, participate in a workshop, reconnect with "the walls and storied halls" of Cole—we will leave the ghost light on for you.

FLOOD ATTENDS VIRGINIA 21 STUDENT LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

Rachel Flood, a senior communication, technology and culture and global studies double major, was accepted into the Virginia 21 Student Leadership Institute, which was held for five days at Christopher Newport University this summer. Flood said, "I learned so much at Virginia 21 about the Virginia state government and how students can come together to create change. The program began with

a crash course in Virginia state government. We also heard about Virginia higher education and the power of students in government." A program designed to increase participation in politics and leadership among the millennial generation, Virginia 21 seeks to empower students with the knowledge and skills they will need to be leaders.

DR. ELICK RETIRES

Dr. Catherine L. Elick, Professor of English, *Emerita*, retired at the end of the past academic year after 29 years of service to Bridgewater College. Dr. Elick received the Ben and Janice Wade Outstanding Teaching Award in 2003 and held the William W. Thomas Chair for Humane Letters from 2010-2017. In 2015 she published *Talking Animals in Children's Fiction: A Critical Study*, a work on animal-human relationships in modern children's fantasies.

DIVISION NEWS

- **Dr. Jessica Brophy**, Assistant Professor of Communication Studies, published “Connecting and Reconnecting: Outfitting the Figure of the Cyborg for Transnational Coalition-building” in *KOME: An International Journal of Pure Communication Inquiry* in December 2016. In March 2017, Dr. Brophy was also invited to become an editorial board member for *KOME*, an international journal sponsored by the Hungarian Communication Association.
- Founded by **James E. Custer ’15**, **Jen Payne ’09** and **Garrett Schwalbach ’15**, Unreal City, Harrisonburg’s newest theatre company, premiered their first production at the Capital Fringe Festival in Washington, D.C. *This Too Comes By Hard*, written by Custer, starred current student **Angie Tolomei ’20**, acting alongside alumni **Will Browning ’15** and **Jessie Houff ’15**, with dramaturgy by **Nicholas Davies ’15**. *This Too Comes By Hard* was named “best of the Fringe,” and Custer was called a “writer to watch” by John Stoltenberg of DC Metro Theatre Arts. **Dr. Scott W. Cole** directed the production with costumes by **Holly Labbe**, lights by **David Vogel**, and sound design by **Ethan Eldred**.
- Carter Center for Worship and Music stage renovations began last winter with numerous small improvements that have resulted in a significant increase in stage space for concerts, especially those involving multiple musical ensembles. Carter Center organ enhancements include a moveable dolly for the organ console, which can now be moved around the stage as needed. Phase II of the project will include additions to the stop list for the venerable Reuter organ, adding to the sonic power and versatility of the instrument. These improvements to the organ are funded by the Reverend Wilfred E. and Dr. Joyce A. Nolen Fund for Music Endowment.
- **Scott Jost**, Professor of Art, and **Nan Covert**, Associate Professor of Art, are currently on sabbatical, while each is working on individual creative projects. Prof. Covert has a studio full of new paintings. Prof. Jost is finishing up the final images for his book on river confluences of the Chesapeake Bay and is working to get it published.
- **Dr. Scott Suter**, Professor of English, contributed to the *Picturing Harrisonburg: Visions of a Shenandoah Valley City since 1828* exhibition and book project. He looked at the cultural history of Harrisonburg through postcards.

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NEW FACULTY

The following faculty are joining our division this semester:

- ▶ **Dr. Johanna Birkland**, Assistant Professor of Communication Studies
Dr. Birkland’s research interests include the adoption and use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) across the life span and, in particular, how the use of ICTs impacts older adults (age 65 or older). Her academic background includes a mix of information studies (Ph.D., Syracuse University), instructional design (M.S., Syracuse University) and communication management (M.S., Ithaca College).
- ▶ **Dr. Sam Hamilton**, Assistant Professor of English
Dr. Hamilton completed his Ph.D. at the University of Pittsburgh with a disciplinary focus on digital composition and pedagogy. Both Hamilton’s teaching approach and research lean on his background as both a high school and college writing teacher. His teaching and scholarship focus on the intertwining of digital technology and schooling, where he seeks to understand how students develop individualized processes for teaching themselves how to be digitally literate.
- ▶ **Prof. Vimari Colón-León**, Teaching Fellow in the Department of Music
The Department of Music welcomes Prof. Vimari Colón-León as the College’s third Teaching Fellow, sponsored by the generous support of a Jessie Ball duPont Fund grant. Colón-León is a candidate for the Ph.D. in Music Education at the University of Miami. She received her master’s and bachelor’s degree in music education, as well as a graduate artist diploma in flute performance, from the Conservatory of Music in Puerto Rico. Her teaching and research interests are teaching music to special populations, parental involvement, body awareness in vocal performers, and multicultural music education.

PROMOTIONS

Dr. Scott Suter, Professor of English, and **Prof. Scott Jost**, Professor of Art, were promoted to the rank of Professor this spring.

division news continued

- **Michael Hough**, Associate Professor of Art, received three awards, including a first place, for the three sculptures he submitted to the Bath County Art Show in Hot Springs, Va. Prof. Hough presented, demonstrated and ran a workshop at the 12th Biennial Mid-Atlantic Clay Conference and exhibited a large group of his large welded steel sculptures at the annual Lexington Block Party and Celebration. He also participated in the SVAC Open Studio trail.
- For the second year in a row, BC Voice, the student media organization, has received recognition for *Veritas*, the College's student newspaper. *Veritas* received a second place award in the 2016-2017 Scholastic Newspaper Awards from the American Scholastic Press Association.
- After a summer spent training in Los Angeles at American Academy of Dramatic Arts, **Emma Leweke '18** will be Agnes in Valley Playhouse's production of *Agnes of God* this October. This past spring Leweke was in Valley Playhouse's production of *A Streetcar Named Desire* alongside **Will Browning '15**.
- **Dr. Christine Carrillo**, **Dr. John McCarty** and 14 music students in the BC chapter of the National Association for Music Education (NAfME) attended the Virginia Music Educators Association annual conference in November.
 - » **Elizabeth Lee** (trumpet) and **Katrina Weirup** (soprano), were chosen to perform during the Collegiate Recital
 - » **Katie McElroy**, **Elizabeth Lee**, **Sara Forren** and **Jessica Patton** were chosen to perform during the Young Composers Forum
 - » The BC chapter of NAfME was honored with an award for advocacy by working in community outreach programs
 - » BC students and faculty reunited with music department alumni for lunch. Alumni included **Wesley Dunlap '13**, **Sara Urry '13**, **Miranda Fitzgerald '15**, **Kimberly Ottman '13** and **Betsy Hulvey '93**.



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